FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

September 2, 2010

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)

Brad Berry (BB)

Gary Cooper (GC)

Jennifer Ciaccio (JC)

John Goldhardt (JG)

Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)

Jie Liu (JiL)

Jack Lounsbury (JaL)

Shane Prine (SP)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

DW: We have no need to look at the last minutes; we'll create new ones today and review them hereafter. These (FSEC) meetings will be on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month; the general Senate meeting will be on the 4th Thursday, so it's sandwiched by our FSEC meetings so we can generate stuff for the general meeting. That'll make it more timely. I'm still waiting on Scott Talbot for our budget, so I don't have a statement on faculty lunches, but I should by next week.

PA: Will our meetings be in this room (Jennings Conference Room)?

DW: Unless I say otherwise, yes.

PA: And where will the general meeting be?

DW: The Cottam room.

GC: Were we able to get rid of last year's debt?

DW: Yes, we're in the black now, but the luncheon we sponsored during the weeks before classes cost us ~$2000. Plus, I turned in 8-10 more sign-ups for dues, so that'll help. At our 1st general Senate meeting, I'd like to have a few sign-up sheets there to encourage more.

JiL: Do we have a sense of a rough percentage of paying faculty?

DW: As of last March, based on votes, there were ~105 people; that leaves 40-45 not paying. For our next meetings, think about the creation of a Faculty Association in which everyone pays by default, and from that group Senators are selected across divisions and schools – a government model. Then Senators choose their FSEC representatives from within the Senate. It makes no sense for all faculty to be Senators, but Senators would bring faculty issues to the Senate, and the FSEC becomes more representative across faculty. We have almost every department represented on the current FSEC, but there are some that aren't and that are too small – no Psychology, for example, though their division is here. Those of you here, talk to constituents in your division, school, etc. and find out what their concerns are. As for our agenda for today: Donna is pushing for us to construct a post-tenure review policy. I've given you each a hand-out with some information I've extracted from the AAUP (American Association of University Professors) official statement from 1999 on this topic – I excerpted their language. I get sense that this policy is something that will happen, but Donna is leaving it to us to articulate the policy, which is crucial – it's a faculty issue. Read the handout and give us feedback at our next meeting. The first portion of it consists of philosophical statements of employment-academic freedom issues without threat of sanctions; the second part consists of minimum standards for good practice (10 principles) – our policy will probably come out of these principles. AAUP has found many issues at other schools that shift the burden of proof to the

faculty member to show why s/he should not be fired – that burden should remain with the institution! According to these principles, faculty have the right of due process – they can demand it, and that should go into our policy language. So think about what goes into a policy – I'm not looking for a magum opus; just clear, concise statements about what happens with post-tenure review. We'll present this to the faculty-at-large, the get it ratified by Academic Council, etc., then it will be posted and used.

GC: Would these reviews be on a 6 year frequency? Shorter?

DW: No, it'd be how we write the policy – timing, sanctions, etc.

PA: In cases you've studied, what is typical?

DW: Anywhere form yearly to 3 years. An institution instigates the review, but not for the purpose of finding reasons to dismiss a faculty member; rather, it is to identify weaknesses in teaching, research, etc. so they can be improved – the institution would pay for whatever is needed to improve according to AAUP. See what we can distill from AAUP thing. Donna wants this within this year – actually, before Christmas.

JC: Is there money in the Professional Development fund?

DW: We can word that in – funding needs to be there to address deficiencies. Because of our growth in faculty, Professional Development funds have been in shorter supply because they haven't grown with the number of faculty. Our policy should enable identification of faculty weaknesses that institutional support can rectify. In terms of malfeasance, those kinds of sanctions are already available to college.

JC: Is this review process on a par with the RTP process – post-tenured faculty would have to produce a portfolio, etc.

DW: No – faculty will have already gone through that during the RTP process, so there would be no need to do again.

JC: So the process is more on par with supervisor and peer evaluations…?

DW: Yes, AAUP uses those examples. What is not clear in AAUP is what to do about student evaluations; here, those are a big part of the RTP review process. If they count for post-tenure as before tenure, it would create an inhibitory environment for faculty to do innovative things, so it's not clear that we can use those for post-tenure review…that gets back into academic freedom. After obtaining tenure, it isn't students that should measure a faculty member's professionalism and performance. Otherwise, it's a personality test.

SP: Speaking of student evaluations – in my technological field, if I'm teaching stuff that is 10 years old, it's old. Students continually turn up reviews saying that stuff I talk about is too dated. Shouldn't that be a factor in post-tenure review?

DW: That would depend on the field….in some it might be, but not in others – classes about ancient Greek philosophy might not need to consider this.

PA: The driving force behind this is state mandates: every institution needs to have this in place. In addition, nationwide it comes from faculty with tenure that don't do anything. We just have to study models and tweak them.

DW: I may have to call people around the state and see if they can provide documentation for their policies for us to use as models. Because we're a teaching college, and student evaluations shouldn't be important, it means that faculty should have a paper trail for anything in their portfolios in terms of possible malfeasance. But e-portfolios will change in structure after tenure. If we write the policy, the administration can't threaten us with the policy. …OK: FSEC dues increase.

JC: How do I check whether or not I'm paying?

DW: Check with HR.

PA: Your paystub will tell you.

DW: If 50-70 people show up for a free lunch, it runs us $900-$1100, and doesn't take very long before our budget is gone again. Plus, we need flexibility to buy awards, gifts, etc. for retiring faculty, send flowers to convalescing faculty, etc. We need that flexibility. Also, I've been paying for SurveyMonkey, to good effect – I think we got better voter turnout using it than with paper, but I've been paying for that on my own (at the Professional Level at $89/3 months) – I'd like our dues to pay for that. We don't use it often, but it's there when we need it. I've gotten a few e-mails from people asking for increased dues so they can get free lunch (that's verbatim)! Some people thought they were paying but weren't and vice-versa.

JaL: There should be a cap on how much of a lunch we can pay for, or a set credit.

DW: I don't know if the cafeteria people are set up to police that.

PA: For the sports camps, they just have a list and check off names as campers come through.

DW: That might work. But a person buying a lunch knows that s/he has paid $4, but they'll get $8 of food, and it would be up to the cashiers to figure out the differences.

PA: We've talked about pre-prepared lunches – box lunches, pizza, etc.

SP: What about using the One Card -- if it comes up with a credit, then the person pays the balance.

DW: But the One Card is not related to our budget.

SP: But can that be set up?

DW: I can hear guy who runs it saying he doesn't want to do it. But do give this some thought…with no increase, we can't do the lunch thing. If there's a mandatory dues payment not related to employment, Donna's not in favor of that. But if everyone mandatorily pays, there's no checking issue by the cashiers. I'd like to implement something by the end of this month. …OK: Louise Excel has asked up to look at core themes; I sent everyone an attachment about it. Do we need to discuss any of this – do we have any direct input? Louise has asked us to look these over and give some input – if we see a weakness, something that sets up faculty in a negative way, etc., but always with accreditation in the background. In my department, one individual rejects using a pre-test/post-test measurement on his courses. To me, this is sanctionable by the department and by the school because it puts accreditation in a vulnerable position – we can't demonstrate learning outcomes without it. Whatever system is used, it goes into accreditation – it goes into Core Theme #1. Be thinking about that. In this instance, I think that the department would be the appropriate sanctioning entity, rather than the school – it should be kept in-house. What should the department chair and the person's colleagues do? Is "competency" measured by a final A grade in the class? Students are seduced by thinking that competency = a high grade. I am always struggling with subjective language like this – what diagnoses "competency"? An operational definition of "competency" is needed.

PA: That presentation we had a couple years ago gave us a definition.

DW: That's why we use a pre-test/post-test system. For something like visual arts, I presume that the students would be assessed on a portfolio basis, and competency is a more abstract concept.

SP: Yes. In here (the core themes), there is lots of subjective language – each department would have to set their own criteria and standards.

DW: Yes, but it has to fit some institutional norm – then individual divisions and departments are looked at not for conformity, but consistency. What's crucial is that each department has to provide information on why it works that way within the department.

JDH: What about issues where there are classes but no degree program? For example, in geology we only have general education courses – no majors, no continuing into other courses, etc. It's easy to track student progress in a degree program: you simply see if students successfully pass courses and progress to higher level courses, and ultimately graduate and move on to grad school or jobs. Without a degree program, we'd simply be assessing whether or not a student can get through a single course, not determine if they've learned anything that they will apply later because there are

no later courses for them to apply it in! So it seems ridiculous and it is giving pre- and post-tests for the sake of giving the tests and being "consistent," not because they measure anything real or useful. It seems that people teaching those kinds of classes are being forced to create a "measurement" tool just for the sake of having a tool, and being consistent with other tools, whereas in a degree program, there's no real tool needed because whether or not students progress in the degree program *is* the tool, and it doesn't require any real effort on the teachers' parts. (Plus, it seems more the job of the Institutional Research department to see if students progress after they graduate.)

DW: Interesting point – I will ask Louise about that.

PA: Accreditors just want to see if we're doing what we say we're doing. They don't compare us against other institutions; just whether or not what we're doing what we're saying we're doing.

DW: Anything else on that? Go to your colleagues in your department and get their feedback and share it with us. OK, next: here's a new organizational chart for the school – this is part of the next Academic Council (an agenda item). (goes over organization)

Many: (inquiries about many departments not being listed at all)

DW: This may just be major changes rather than a full structure since not all departments are represented.

JC: Is there a benefit to having lots of schools, each with its own dean?

JaL: It reduces the responsibility of any one dean.

DW: This is to balance out levels of responsibility across campus – it may not make sense which departments are grouped with which others in a school. Departments in a school are intended to collaborate/cooperate with each other. I don't know how long this will be in effect. It's an informational item for Academic Council, not a voting item as far as I know. …We've also been asked by Donna to look at Policy #3: Faculty categories. Currently, 0.5- and 0.74-time faculty without benefits– it's not clear if we represent them.

GC: They're classified as adjuncts.

DW: Yes, but they're full time – this policy was voted on in January.

GC: AAUP has a good page on that.

DW: Can you send a link that? To the FSEC List?

GC: Yup.

DW: So you hire someone at 0.74, they have a Master's degree and 35 years of experience – can they work toward promotion?

PA: Some are identified as "instructors."

DW: Yes (reads list of categories in the policy) – Donna wants us to identify and define each category.

GC: We've got adjuncts teaching the same stuff as some of our full-time faculty, but the adjuncts don't get the benefits of faculty (an office, a computer, etc.).

DW: There are almost as many adjuncts as full-time faculty on this campus – that's not good for accreditation! I'd hate to see any department get into situation I saw in Denver in which the Communications department had 11 full-time faculty, only three of which had a Ph.D.; all the others had Master's degrees. But among the 35 adjuncts, there were 29 with Ph.D.s!